

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The present amendment is submitted in an earnest effort to advance the case to issue without delay.

Claim 1 was objected to for a grammatically incorrect informality. Claim 3 was said to be missing a period. These claims have been amended to remedy the aforementioned informalities.

Claim 1 has further been amended to specify that the composition can comprise from 10 to 99.9% by weight of stearic acid. Support is found at page 13 (lines 16-17), page 12 (line 15) and in Example 4.

New claim 14 derives support from page 15 (line 7 and 21). New claim 15 derives support from Example 4.

Claims 1-7 and 9-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Robinson et al. (WO 00/62740). Applicant traverses this rejection.

Robinson does not disclose a composition comprising allantoin and either 10-99% stearic acid or 15-85% of a detergent active.

Further, Robinson does not teach detergent cleansing systems, particularly detergent systems in the form of soap bars.

Claim 8 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Robinson et al. (WO 00/62740) as applied to claims 1-7 and 9-13, and further in view of Biedermann et al. (U.S. Patent 5,833,998). Applicant traverses this rejection.

Those skilled in the art would not consider the teachings of Robinson or Biedermann to arrive at the present invention. The subject matter of these references do not fall within the technical field of the present invention, namely compositions and methods for skin lightening. In fact, Robinson relates to compositions for regulating visible and tactile discontinuities associated with skin aging. Biedermann relates to compositions for regulating the oily and/or shiny appearance of skin.

Furthermore, Biedermann explicitly teaches away from the present invention. This reference reports that the compositions containing B vitamins should be formulated to avoid discoloring skin. See, for example, column 2 (lines 10-14). For these reasons the claims would not be rendered obvious.

In view of the foregoing amendment and comments, applicant requests the Examiner to reconsider the rejection and now allow the claims.

Respectfully submitted,



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